

III.—*The Crested Penguin* (*Catarrhactes chrysocome Forster*)
in *Australian Waters*. By H. STUART DOVE, M.R.A.O.U.

SOME four years ago, Dr. Brooke Nicholls, of Melbourne, Victoria, befriended a Crested Penguin which came ashore when he was staying with a camping party at Lorne, a pleasant watering-place on the south coast of Victoria. Some of the party were cray-fishing when they noticed the bird on some rocks at the water's edge; after watching it for some time, they returned to camp, and were surprised to find that the newcomer had followed them for several hundred yards, over rocks and sand. Placing him in a bag, they carried him to one of the houses where there was a large sea-bath, and in this, "Billy" (as he was christened) lived on and off for six weeks. During the first fortnight his plumage underwent a complete moult, after which he looked very handsome, the new crest being of a bright sulphur-yellow. While moulting, he would not enter the water. He soon became very tame, allowing the children to take him up and carry him from place to place; he would eat raw meat, but was fed mostly on fish, sometimes the freshwater minnows, sometimes sea-fish which were liberated in the bath and captured by him after an exciting chase.

Billy's fondness for fresh water was remarkable, his greatest delight being to go with the bathers to the shower-bath; the greater the force of the shower, the better he liked it. From time to time, he would stretch himself at full length on the floor, shuffling and squawking with pleasure as the water splashed upon him. Strange to say, when taken to the sea, he refused to enter the water, but made off home as fast as his feet would carry him. He usually walked one foot after another but, when wishing to quicken his pace, would hop along. At length, he was persuaded to go with the bathers through the breakers, and once in deep water, he continued swimming oceanwards until eventually lost to sight.

Last summer, a gentleman with his family staying on another part of the south coast of Victoria, surprised a

Penguin of the same species on the shore, and tried to capture it, but it eluded pursuit and dashed into the water.

In September of last year (1913), a good example of *C. chrysocome* came ashore between the Mersey and Don rivers, not far from Devonport, Tasmania. This is the first Crested Penguin I have ever seen in the north of the Island, although two or three have been taken in the south, where one would naturally expect to see those which have strayed from the Antarctic Islands which are their home. The specimen in question was in splendid order, evidently only just deceased, and had escaped the battering of the reefs; stuffed and mounted, he forms a conspicuous addition to my collection of natural curiosities. He evidently had another moult to undergo before reaching maturity, the measurements and colouring not quite agreeing with those given by the authorities for an adult.

Sir W. Buller, 'Manual of Birds of New Zealand,' 1882, gives under *Eudyptes chrysocomus* Forst., the following:— "Crown, sides of head, throat, and hind part of neck black. . . . from base of upper mandible, on each side, a broad line of pale golden yellow passes over the eyes and is continued beyond in a crest of fine pointed feathers extending two inches beyond the head. Underparts, silvery white; upper, bluish black. Total length 27 inches; wing 8.5; beak 2.75; tarsus 1.5." Robert Hall, 'Key to the Birds of Australia,' 1906, gives under *Catarrhactes chrysocome* Forst.:—"General colour dark slate; crown black; longest crest-feather about 3.5 inches, the crest-feathers being yellow and black; forehead uniform black. Total length 25 inches. Young. Crest is indicated by a yellowish-white line; chin ashy-white." In my specimen I should describe the upper surface as a fine dark metallic blue, upper surface of wings the same, tail somewhat lighter blue; under surface silvery white, *except the throat and chin, which are ashy-white*, with a *small dark patch* a little below the base of beak. Sides of the head below the crest, a darkish grey; forehead, bluish grey. The wings above are of the same tint as the back; beneath, white, with broad patch of dark blue at the tips, the same at

the base, extending somewhat on to body in front of wing; there is also a border of dark blue on the upper edge, but not extending to the tip. Beak dark red; feet reddish, webbed, with strong nails. The tail is long for a Penguin, and formed of stiff, narrow feathers. The crest is black, formed of fine pointed feathers, the pale yellow appearing only underneath, and beginning behind the eye.

Total length 24 inches; wing 6; tail 3; foot (on flat, with tarsus) 4.5; beak 2; crest 3.

It will be seen that the throat in the Devonport specimen differs considerably from that of the adult as described by Buller; a photograph of Dr. Nicholls' "Billy" after the moult shows a very black throat, that colour extending in a straight line to the sides of the neck. The very small amount of yellow in the crest of my bird is somewhat puzzling in an individual so close to maturity as its size denotes; it has occurred to me that this particular specimen may not be *C. chrysocome*, but possibly a new form. The thick, strong beak, which is its most noticeable feature, agrees well with Hall's description of that feature in *Catarrhactes*: "Bill moderately long and very stout, the culmicorn being divided from the latericorn by a deep groove, which is much swollen towards the base." G. M. Mathews, in his 'List of the Birds of Australia,' 1913, includes *Catarrhactes* with *Eudyptes*, thus considering *C. chrysocome* as identical with *E. pachyrhynchus*; according to Buller ('Manual of Birds of N. Z.') all the adult measurements (except the tarsus) of *E. pachyrhynchus* are greater than those of *E. chrysocomus* (= *C. chrysocome*). A. J. Campbell, 'Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds,' 1900, records that a Crested Penguin (*C. chrysocome*) was captured at King Island, Bass' Strait, in 1887; he has also recorded the species for West Australia (near Cape Leeuwin). In connection with the Devonport specimen, and that seen on the Victorian coast last summer, Dr. Nicholls speculates in a recent Melbourne 'Argus' as to whether the close approach of Antarctic bergs to our coasts may have brought these Penguins farther north than usual.